Working on the Virtual Hill
The National Mood and a New Meaning of Interdisciplinary Physics

Kyle Blasinsky, Mather Public Policy Intern
Who, Where, Why

Kyle Blasinsky (Me)
Intern

Rep. Bill Foster
Congressman for Illinois’ 11\textsuperscript{th} Congressional District
Ph.D. Physicist & Businessman

John Mather
Ph.D. Physicist & Nobel Prize Winner

The United States House of Representatives
It’s all about the numbers...

1 Post Offices Named
4 Letters of Congratulations
14 Telebriefings Memo’d
31 Bills Reviewed and Memo’d
What does that mean?

A majority of the job:
1. Cosponsor Memos
2. Briefing Memos
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1. Cosponsor Memos
2. Briefing Memos

Interest group or a colleague wants Rep. Foster to cosponsor a particular bill.

The Process
Research → Review → Summarize → Recommendation
What does that mean?

A majority of the job:
1. Cosponsor Memos
2. Briefing Memos

Interest group wants to inform (i.e., lobby) policymakers on an issue.

The Process

Watch → Record → Summarize → Recommendations
H.R. 7308 - RISE Act

To authorize appropriations for offsetting the costs related to reductions in research productivity resulting from the coronavirus pandemic.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Degette introduced the following bill, which was referred to the Committee on:

A BILL

To authorize appropriations for offsetting the costs related to reductions in research productivity resulting from the coronavirus pandemic.

In recent years, some policymakers have suggested the United States is too dependent on imports of certain products from countries like China. With the outbreak of COVID-19, the calls to reshape the supply chain of a number of products, including pharmaceuticals and other medical equipment, have intensified.

Policymakers hoping to usher in a new era of industrial policy should be cautious. Restoring the entire pharmaceutical supply chain would increase costs for consumers, dampen innovation and hurt the competitiveness of a global industry.

In conjunction with the release of a new R Street white paper exploring all of the major issues surrounding the pharmaceutical supply chain, we invite you to a webinar that will dispel a number of myths and offer positive, concrete ideas that are available to policymakers.

FEATURING

Clark Packard (Moderator)
Resident Fellow and Trade Policy Counsel, R Street Institute

Bill Watson
Associate Fellow, R Street Institute

Jacqueline Varas
Director of Immigration and Trade Policy, American Action Forum
Is it meaningful work though?
America’s really big problems

63% Ethics in Government
58% Coronavirus
57% Health Care Affordability
51% Criminal Justice Inequity
50% Unemployment

America’s really big problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Category</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>63%</td>
<td>Ethics in Government</td>
<td>Government Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58%</td>
<td>Coronavirus</td>
<td>Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57%</td>
<td>Health Care Affordability</td>
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</tbody>
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Where my work falls...

- Government Administration: 26%
- Health: 19%
- Criminal Justice: 19%
- Economy: 26%

Percentage of bills I reviewed that fall into the respective category.
Yes, fun and meaningful work!

People care about the **economy**, individual and community **health**, the **justice** system, and the **government** itself.

My work focused primarily on **health care**, **government administration** and oversight, **criminal justice**, and the **economy**.

Yes, my work aligned with the **priorities** of the American **people**.
Yes, fun and meaningful work!

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Of the 31 bills I reviewed, only one became law. What’s the deal?
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*What’s the deal?*

(1) Partisanship – (2) Messaging – (3) Volume
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Huge thank you to all those who made this summer possible, meaningful, educational, and fun.

The Society of Physics Students: Kayla Stephens, Mikayla Cleaver, & Brad Conrad; American Institute of Physics; Dr. John Mather; Rep. Bill Foster and the IL-11 Team: Hector Arias, Scott Shewcraft, Samantha Warren, Merit Schumaker, Elise Sugarman, Diem-Mi Lu, Maggie Schmidt, Greg Cybulski, & Grecia Benitez; and of course, all my fellow SPS interns.